Low Defeance Expenditure by India

52. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI O. P. KOHLI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's military expenditure is incredibly low considering the huge frontier the country has to defend; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to increase expenditure on Defence in view of continuing threats from across the border?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) India's defence expenditure is based upon the requirements of adequate and optimun defence preparedness within available financial resources.

(b) The Government is committed to ensuring the security of the country against all threats and eventualities and to locate whatever human and material resources that are required to meet them.

Canadian Charter Flight Strays into Defence Airspace at Mumbai

53. SHRI K. M. SAIFULLAH:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Canadian Charter flight from Dubai to Delhi strayed into defence airspace at Mumbai in the last week of September;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Commander of the plane who deviated from the flight plan submitted to Air Traffic Control was interrogated; and

(d) the cause of deviation from the prescribed route and action taken against the defaulters?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) On 27.9.1997, a Canadian non scheduled charter aircraft (flight No. 4A/425/9) on a flight from Dubai to Delhi via Bombay deviated from the planned route and flew within 30 kms of Jamnagar. The interceptor aircraft were scrambled from Bhuj and the aircraft was directed to land at Bombay by the Air Force radar unit.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The commander of the flight had stated that he deviated from the approved flight path to follow a shorter route in order to save fuel. A thorough search of aircraft was carried out but nothing incriminating could be found. The aircraft was cleared to proceed further.

Increase in incidents of Border Firing

54. SHRI GHUERAN AZAM:
DR. MOHAN BABU:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the border firing incidents have increased since the past few months;

(b) if so, the details of border firing held on Indo-Pak border during the last six months together with the number of casualties and whether Indian forces have given befitting reply;

(c) whether the persons living in the border areas have suffered a lot, and

(d) if so, the reasons for border firing and the compensation paid by Government to the jawans killed/injured and also to the civilians residing in border villages?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) There was an increase in firings on Indo-Pak LOC/International Border during August and September, 1997;

(b) A statement showing details of firing and casualty at the Indo-Pak border in J & K during the last six months is appended (*See* below.) Army has been responding to unprovoked Pakistani firing at appropriate time and place, taking due care that the situation remains localised, there are no civilian casualties, our